

Salt River Fire Department Operating Guidelines

Fireground Safety

Rev. May 2008

202.05

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TACTICAL POSITIONING

Positioning of operating companies can severely affect the safety/survival of such companies.

Personnel must use caution when placed in the following positions:

- Above the fire (floors/roof)
- Where fire can move in behind them
- Where a Division cannot control position/retreat
- When involved with opposing fire streams
- Combining interior and exterior attacks
- With limited access--one way in/out
- Operating under involved roof structures
- In areas containing hazardous materials
- Below ground fires (basements, etc.)
- In areas where a backdraft potential exists
- Above/below ground rescue

The safety of firefighting personnel represents the major reason for an effective and well-timed offensive/defensive decision and the associated write-off by Command.

THE TWO STRATEGIES ARE BASED ON A STANDARD RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN THAT IS TO BE EMPLOYED AT ALL STRUCTURE FIRES.

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WITHIN A STRUCTURED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

- ***WE MAY RISK OUR LIVES A LOT TO PROTECT SAVABLE LIVES***
- ***WE MAY RISK OUR LIVES A LITTLE TO PROTECT SAVABLE PROPERTY***
- ***WE WILL NOT RISK OUR LIVES AT ALL TO SAVE WHAT IS ALREADY LOST***

When operating in a defensive mode, operating positions should be as far from the involved area as possible while still remaining effective. Position and operate from behind barriers if available (fences, walls, etc.).

The intent is for personnel to utilize safe positioning where possible /available, in an effort to safeguard against sudden hazardous developments such as backdraft explosion, structural collapse, etc.

When operating in an offensive mode, be aggressively offensive. An effective, coordinated interior attack operation, directed toward knocking down the fire, eliminates most eventual safety problems.

Due to the inherent hazards of the immediate fire or incident scene, efforts will be made by Command to limit the number of personnel on the fireground to those assigned to a necessary function.

All personnel shall be:

1. Positioned in Staging.
2. Assigned to a task or operating within a division or group.
3. Be assigned to a Resource, Staging, or Rehabilitation Group if the crew has completed their assignment and no other assignment is available within a tactical division or group until such time as they can be reassigned to an operating division, group or released to in-service status.

The intent of this procedure is to minimize fireground confusion/congestion and to limit the number of personnel exposed to fireground hazards to only those necessary to successfully control the operation.

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Individuals or crews shall be restricted from wandering about the fireground or congregating in non-functional groups. If personnel have not been assigned to a division, group or do not have a necessary staff function to perform, they shall remain outside the fireground perimeter.

When it is necessary to engage personnel in exceptionally hazardous circumstances (i.e., to perform a rescue), Command will limit the number of personnel exposed to an absolute minimum and assure that all feasible safety measures are taken.

In extremely hazardous situations (flammable liquids, LP gas, hazardous materials, etc.) Command will engage only an absolute minimum number of personnel within the hazard zone.

Unmanned master streams will be utilized wherever possible.

In situations where crews must operate from opposing or conflicting positions, such as front vs. rear attack streams, roof crews vs. interior crews, etc., utilize radio or face-to-face communications to coordinate your actions with those of the opposing crew in an effort to prevent needless injuries.

Command should notify Division or Group Officers or Company Officers of opposing or conflicting operations.

Ground crews must be notified and evacuated from interior positions before ladder pipes go into operation.

Do not operate exterior streams, whether hand lines, master streams, ladder pipes, etc., into an area where interior crews are operating. This procedure is intended to prevent injuries to personnel due to stream blast and the driving of fire and/or heavy heat and smoke onto interior crews.

When laddering a roof, the ladder selected shall be one, which will extend a minimum of 4'-6' above the roofline. This shall be done in an effort to provide personnel operating on the roof with a visible means of egress.

If possible, when laddering buildings under fire conditions, place ladders near building corners or fire walls as these areas are generally more stable in the event of structural failure.

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When operating either above or below ground level, establish at least two (2) separate escape routes/means where possible, (such as stairways, ladders, exits, etc.), preferably at opposite ends or diagonal corners of the building or separated by considerable distance.

Hot Zone

The Hot Zone will be defined as any area that requires an SCBA, charged hoseline, special protective clothing, or in which Firefighting Personnel are at risk of becoming lost, trapped, or injured by the environment or structure. The following situations would be included inside the Hot Zone:

- Entering a structure reported to be on fire
- Operating in close proximity to the structure during exterior operations
- Confined Space or Trench Rescues
- Operating close to crane operations or close to swift water operations
- Building collapse areas
- Operating close to helicopter operations
- Extrication operations

ALL FIRE FIGHTERS WORKING IN THE HOT ZONE SHALL BE IN CREWS WITH A MINIMUM OF TWO PERSONNEL. THE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM WILL BE IN PLACE.

Warm Zone

The Warm Zone will be defined as just outside of the Hot Zone where the firefighters start their operations on the fireground. This zone is where the fire fighter is not at risk of becoming lost, trapped, or injured by the environment or structure. The following functions could be done in this zone:

- Forward fire apparatus working the incident (i.e.; engines, ladders)

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- Laying lines
- HMRT and TRT developing tactics and strategies
- Utility truck operations
- Special equipment needs
- Accountability Officer
- Fire Investigations

If at any time firefighters in the Warm Zone becomes threatened, then this would become a Hot Zone.

Cold Zone

The Cold Zone will be defined as outside of the Warm Zone where no one is at risk because of the incident, the following functions could be done in this area:

- Command
- Level I & Level II staging
- Support and Staff personnel
- Canteen
- Rehab
- Media
- P.D. Liaison
- The Responsible Party